

Claims 1-10 and 12 are also rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over El Tayar et al. in view of Tan WO '284. This rejection is respectfully traversed. Reconsideration and withdrawal thereof are requested.

The Examiner asserts El Tayar as teaching the conjugation and elimination reactions shown above (*via* a disulfide bond) and cites Tan for the feature of the dependent claims that the protein is an enzyme and specifically methioninase. The number of polymer molecules eliminated from the conjugate recited in claim 10 is said to be a matter of routine experimentation.

Applicants submit that the Examiner fails to establish *prima facie* obviousness of the claimed invention. In particular, the combination of references fails to disclose or suggest at least one feature recited in the claims. In the present instance, as explained above, the combined references do not disclose or suggest elimination of a polymer conjugated to a protein *via* a thioester bond.


Applicants submit that the present claims recite subject matter that is free of the prior art of record. The favorable actions of withdrawal of the standing rejections and allowance of the present claims are respectfully requested.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Mark J. Nuell, Ph.D., Reg. No. 36,623, at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37.C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

By: 
Mark J. Nuell, Ph.D.
Registration No. 36,623
BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP
12770 High Bluff Drive, Suite 260
San Diego, California 92130
(858) 792-8855
Attorney for Applicant